

Project To-Do List

For many college students, the first big project, be it a research paper, oral presentation, or creative work, is a big challenge. Sometimes these projects are worth a considerable percentage of your total semester grade, and your professors expect you to spend a lot of time on them. They can tell when a big project is hastily put together a day or two before it is due. There can be so much to do for a big project that the assignment may seem overwhelming.

The trick to getting a big project done is to break it up into smaller projects that are steps along the road to completion. Creating these steps makes a big job less intimidating, helps you plan how much time you need to finish the project, and clearly defines progress as you work through each step. The attached to-do list form can help you with this process.

First, divide the project into steps, each with its own “due date” deadline. For an example, see page 2 of this document. A long research paper has been broken down into three steps: deciding on a topic, researching it, and writing the paper. Each step has then been broken down into smaller steps, again with completion deadlines. The checkboxes can be used to indicate when each step of the project is done.

Page 3 of this document is a blank project to-do list, which you may copy for planning more than one project or projects that comprise more than three steps.

Sample Project To-Do List

<p>Project Overview: Fifteen-page paper on an American playwright from the 20th or 21st century. Includes a brief bio of the playwright and discussion of five of his/her plays.</p>	
<p>Step 1: Decide on a playwright. Step Deadline: 10-1-10</p>	
<p>Task Deadlines: <u>9-15-10</u> <u>9-25-10</u> <u>10-1-10</u></p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Talk to professor about possible playwrights and check them out on the FSU library website</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Narrow choices down to 3, skim through a play by each one</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Make the decision</u>
<p>Step 2: Read bios and plays Step Deadline: 10-21-10</p>	
<p>Task Deadlines: <u>10-5-10</u> <u>10-10-10</u> <u>10-21-10</u></p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Find biographical info in library and online; choose 6 or 7 plays that sound interesting or seem to represent the playwright's work</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Find the plays. Skim quickly through them and decide on 5</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Read bios and plays, take notes on both</u>
<p>Step 3: Write the paper Step Deadline: 12-2-10</p>	
<p>Task Deadlines: <u>10-30-10</u> <u>11-15-10</u> <u>11-27-10</u> <u>12-2-10</u></p>	<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Outline complete; discuss with professor during office hours</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>First draft complete; take draft to Reading/Writing Center for feedback</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Second draft complete; take to RWC if needed</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Third draft complete; submit to professor</u>

Project To-Do List

Adapted from <http://gradschool.about.com>

Project Overview:	
Step:	
Step Deadline:	
Task Deadlines: _____ _____ _____	Tasks: <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Step:	
Step Deadline:	
Task Deadlines: _____ _____ _____	Tasks: <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Step:	
Step Deadline:	
Task Deadlines: _____ _____ _____	Tasks: <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____

*Add as many additional pages as needed to capture all of the steps in your project